Credentialing Overview

How does credentialing affect the Army Soldier?

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What is credentialing?

- Many occupations are guided by certain professional and technical standards.
- The process of meeting these standards and earning official recognition (in the form of credentials– licenses or certificates) is called ***credentialing***.

Licensure

- *Who grants licenses?* Federal, state or local governmental agencies.
- *Why?* To set professional standards, ensure safety and quality of work, such as medical licenses for doctors. Laws and regulations define licensing standards.
- *Are they voluntary?* Licenses are typically mandatory (although they may be waived for certain military personnel).

Certification

- *Who grants certifications?* Non-governmental agencies, associations, and companies.
- *Why?* To set professional standards for qualifications, such as a certification for a crane operator, or a Novell Network Certified Engineer. These standards are not defined by laws or regulations.
- *Are they voluntary?* Usually, although state licensure boards and employers may require certification.
- More than one organization can offer certifications for the same occupation.

What kinds of requirements can credentials have?

- Credentialing boards determine the requirements for licensure and certification. Typically they require some combination of the following:
  - Education
  - Training
  - Work or professional experience
  - Examinations
  - Other unique job-related requirements
- For some credentials, boards may have requirements related to:
  - Residency
  - How recently the training or experience took place
  - Periodic renewal, typically every one to three years
  - Continuing education requirements or reexamination requirements associated with renewal

So what's that mean to me?

- In service:
  - Civilian credentialing can contribute to personal and professional career development.
  - Soldiers competing for promotion to sergeant and staff sergeant can now receive promotion points for approved civilian technical certifications.
- Transitioning and post-service:
  - Federal, state, or local law may require specific credentials to legally perform some jobs.
  - Employers may choose to hire only employees who have certain credentials, or to pay those employees more.
  - Credentials may improve your prospects for promotion.
  - Credentials demonstrate to civilian employers that your skills are on par with your civilian peers.

Credentialing Costs

- There are two primary costs associated with credentialing:
  - Credentialing board fees (e.g., application, exam, renewal fees)
  - Supplemental training may be needed to qualify for the credential
- Resources are available to Soldiers to help defray these costs:
  - The Montgomery GI Bill will reimburse up to $2,000 per test for civilian occupational licensing and certification exams. There is no limit to the number of tests that can be reimbursed. Fees for re-testing and renewing licenses or certifications are also covered.
  - Army Tuition Assistance pays tuition costs up to a cap of $250 per semester hour and an annual ceiling of $4,500.
  - Other programs in the Departments of Army, Defense, and Veterans Affairs can also help with supplemental training (e.g., Army e-Learning, DANTES, and the Montgomery GI Bill).

More Information

- The Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) website is designed expressly for you, to help you find and understand the civilian credentials related to your Army training. Visit COOL online at: https://www.cool.army.mil/index.htm
- For more explanation about credentialing, see the COOL About Credentials page: https://www.cool.army.mil/about.htm
- For more information on costs and resources, see the COOL Costs and Resources page: https://www.cool.army.mil/costs.htm
- To find certifications related to your MOS, visit the COOL Home page and click on Enlisted or Warrant Officer search: https://www.cool.army.mil/index.htm